1919

THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE

Manitoba
Culture, Heritage
and Recreation

To the Reader:

"1919: The Winnipeg General Strike" is a driving and walking tour that introduces the reader to this important event in Canadian history. This thematic tour identifies specific historical sites to guide the reader through the events of the General Strike. The tour is divided into three areas that will take the reader into north and south Winnipeg and conclude in the commercial district. Several hours are required to complete the tour, although the reader is encouraged to set aside more time in order to stop and visit each site and its surrounding area.

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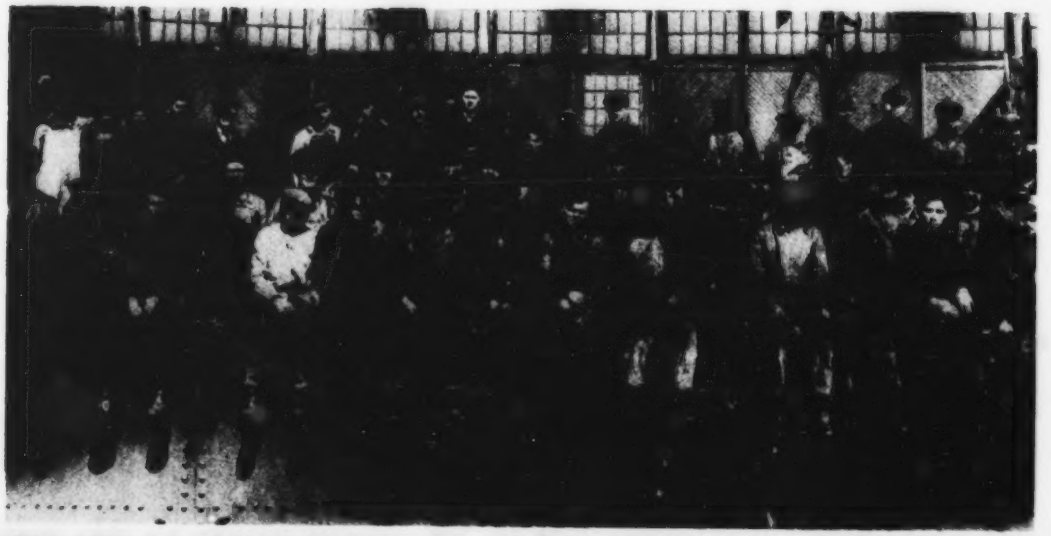


1919 THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE

A DRIVING AND WALKING TOUR

Introduction

"Thursday, May 15, 1919 is a date that will live long in the history of Winnipeg," declared the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike. "In less than two hours the whole productive industry of a whole city was tied up, as men and women and boys and girls came trooping out of shop and store and factory, not a wheel was turning in the big plants, not a street car was visible, and on the face of every worker was the cheerful, optimistic smile of confidence in the justice of their cause, and their firm determination to organize in any manner, for any lawful purpose, which would better their conditions and assure to all a living wage." (*Winnipeg 1919*)

Businessmen and the government offered a different interpretation: "All eyes in Canada have turned upon Winnipeg where its citizens have been fighting whole-heartedly and with a very generous measure of success against a determined attempt to establish Bolshevism and the rule of the Soviet here and then expand it all over Canada. Between twenty and thirty thousand workers were tricked and betrayed into striking through the machinations of a number of confessed Bolshevists in the Winnipeg Labor Temple. The issue went right to the heart of the great body of the middle class citizens whom the strike leaders sought to deprive of the very necessaries of life. The general strike was recognized as an attempt at revolution — and the citizens proceeded to combat it as such." (*Winnipeg 1919*)

The whole country was suddenly watching Winnipeg in 1919. What was happening among the workers of Canada's third largest city? Worried employers read of an entire city paralyzed by militant workers demanding collective bargaining and higher wages, of mass demonstrations in the streets, and the firing of the police force.

Workers took inspiration from Winnipeg. Here was the solidarity of purpose among working people that just might resolve their many grievances accumulated during World War I : profiteering by some companies, government opposition to labour and political organizations, and living and working conditions that had improved little since 1900. In cities and towns across Canada, workers through strikes and protests joined the Winnipeg strikers in labour's revolt of 1919.

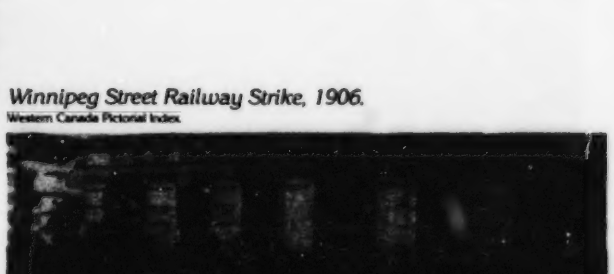
The General Strike grew out of two ordinary strikes that began in early May 1919. One involved the Building Trades Council, representing the city's building-trades unions, and the other, the Metal Trades Council,

Trade Union Convention Delegates, c. 1915.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

C.N.R. Band, Transcona Shops.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers Float, c. 1915.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Winnipeg Street Railway Strike, 1906.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.



composed of the nineteen craft unions of the metal workers. Although their disputes with the Builders' Exchange and Metal Trades Contractors were separate, the strikers shared a similar objective: recognition of their respective councils as the workers' bargaining agent. The employers' associations, while prepared to meet with individual unions, refused industry-wide negotiations with the councils.

On May 6, leaders of the Building Trades and Metal Trades councils appealed to the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council for its support in the conflict. The Trades and Labor Council, the central organization of Winnipeg's unionized workers, agreed that all its affiliated unions would be polled on their willingness to support a general sympathetic strike on behalf of the construction and metal trades workers. On May 13, an overwhelming majority of its membership voted in favour of this motion. Soon the city's union members, joined by thousands of unorganized workers, brought international attention to Winnipeg when they launched the largest general strike to that date in Canadian history. The strike that directly involved one third of the city's population of 137,000 residents was to last for six weeks and to end in bloodshed and the imprisonment of the labour leaders.

The solidarity of Winnipeg workers in 1919 was rooted in a tradition of labour activism. As early as the 1880s when Winnipeg was a small frontier town, railway and building trades workers organized themselves into the Knights of Labor, created the first Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, and published a labour newspaper. By the 1900s, the railway and building trades workers represented the leading edge of a powerful craft union movement that was expanding its influence into other industrial sectors. Many manufacturers resisted unionization and demands for better wages and working conditions, and before World War I, many strikes by metal, construction, clothing, and retail workers were fought over these issues. These confrontations and other matters of interest were reported in the Winnipeg *Voice*, a weekly newspaper sponsored by the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council. The *Voice*, first printed in the 1890s, published until 1918 when the Trades and Labor Council abandoned it in favour of the *Western Labor News*, edited by William Ivens, a minister in the Labor Church, activist in the Socialist Party of Canada, and a leader of the General Strike.

Articles in the *Voice* and the *Western Labor News*

John Queen, Strike leader, future M.L.A.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba

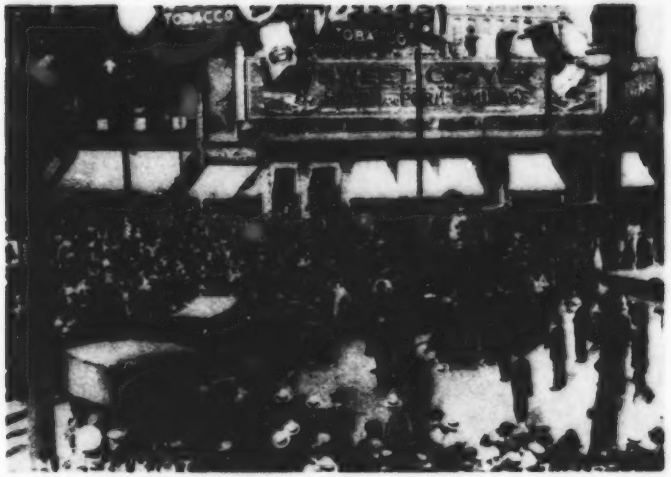
Victoria Park 1919, Strikers' meeting, speaker — R.E. Bray.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Railway workers.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Staff of Winnipeg's first labour newspaper, c. 1897.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

reflected the intense debate between the socialists and labourists over labours' involvement in politics. These discussions were not exclusive to the English language labour press, as they found expression in the many socialist orientated papers published by recently arrived immigrant groups. Indeed, Winnipeg was a centre for political activism in Canada and supported influential locals of the Socialist Party of Canada, Social Democratic Party, Independent Labor Party, and a host of smaller organizations. Events during World War I, especially the War Measures Act that declared many of these groups illegal, brought together socialists and labourists in a search for new strategies against what they saw as a government and employer conspiracy to deny workers their political and trade union rights. By 1918, labour meetings in Winnipeg were punctuated with calls for a One Big Union of all workers and the inclusion of the general strike in labour's arsenal. In June, in a preliminary to the 1919 General Strike, the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council helped civic workers win a significant wage increase and union recognition with a partial general strike.

In 1919, the leaders of the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council were not conspiring to create a revolution in Canada. Their primary objective was to achieve collective bargaining and a living wage for all workers. Many though shared a vision of a new society created through democratic processes, for as they wrote in 1919, "workers want the control of industry in their own hands as soon as possible so that they can get the full product of their toil and eliminate production for profit. But they will wait until this is accomplished through constitutional processes."



Portage and Main, June 10, 1919.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Troops on Main Street, "Bloody Saturday."
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Anti-strike war veterans parade.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Chronology of Main Events of the Winnipeg General Strike

1919

March R.J. Johns and R.B. Russell of the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council attend the Calgary Convention where 250 trade union delegates vote unanimously to form the One Big Union.

May 1 After three months of negotiations with the Winnipeg Builders' Exchange, all the unions grouped together under the Building Trades Council go on strike.

May 2 A strike is called by the Metal Trades Council of workers at three of the main metal-contracting shops.

May 6 Building Trades Council and Metal Trades Council inform Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council of refusal of the employers to bargain with them. TLC unanimously decides to poll all affiliated unions on a general sympathetic strike.

May 13 Report of strike vote: 8,667 for and 645 against. A general Strike Committee of 300 is set up, made up of 3 delegates from each union. An executive Central Strike Committee of 15 is to be elected later.

May 15 — General strike commences at 11 a.m. Within two hours the whole productive life of the city grinds to a halt as thousands of unorganized workers join the union members in walking off their jobs.
— A mass meeting of the three main organizations of returned soldiers declares full support to the strike.

May 16 Winnipeg Citizens' Committee of 1000 is announced. Its aim is to fight the strike.

May 17 The Strike Committee asks for a meeting with city council to discuss maintenance of essential services. At this meeting owners of dairies suggest that the Strike Committee issue work authorization cards to permit milk deliveries and some other services to continue.

May 22 Hon. Arthur Meighen, acting Minister of Justice, and Senator Gideon Robertson, Minister of Labour, arrive by train in Winnipeg, accompanied by several prominent members of the Committee of 1000 who had joined them in Fort William. They engage in a busy round of discussions but ignore the Strike Committee.

May 25 — Senator Robertson issues an ultimatum to the postal employees, giving them until 10 a.m. the following day to return to work and sign an undertaking to sever all connections with the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, on pain of dismissal.
— Provincial and civic governments issue similar ultimatums, the provincial order being directed mainly at telephone operators because the telephone system is provincially owned, and they are therefore employees of the government.
— Mass meeting of 5,000 strikers in Victoria Park rejects all ultimatums.

May 30 City police are given twenty-four hours to sign a contract that prohibits membership in any union whatever. The police refuse, at the same time pledging to uphold law and order.

June 1 Ten thousand returned soldiers march to provincial legislative buildings to express their solidarity with the strike, demand provincial legislation to enforce collective bargaining and call upon the premier to withdraw his ultimatum to the telephone operators. After meeting the premier, they march to city hall and present similar demands.

June 3 Winnipeg daily papers begin carrying ads sponsored by the Committee of 1000 calling for the deportation of "aliens" who support the strike.
By now a wave of sympathetic strikes is spreading across Canada. Workers in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal, and Toronto participate in the protest, along with workers in smaller Canadian towns like Brandon, Manitoba and Amherst, Nova Scotia.

June 6 Government in Ottawa introduces amendments to Immigration Act permitting deportation without trial of anyone not born in Canada who is accused of sedition.

June 8 J.S. Woodsworth returns to Winnipeg after a number of years as a longshoreman in Vancouver and addresses a meeting of 10,000 under auspices of the Labor Church.

June 9 Entire police force is dismissed for refusing to sign the undertaking demanded of them, and Committee of 1000 begins recruitment of "specials."

June 16 - 17 Metal-trades employers publish what they consider to be a compromise proposal to settle the strike. That very evening, however, and into the early hours of the next day, the RNWMP carries out a series of raids on labour halls and on homes of strike leaders, arresting ten people and transporting them to the Stony Mountain penitentiary thirty-two kilometers north of Winnipeg.

June 18 Announcement made that the arrested leaders would be held for deportation proceedings in line with the new Immigration Act and that bail would therefore be refused.

June 21 — As a result of a storm of protest from all over the country, bail is granted six of the ten prisoners.
— Silent parade called to protest the arrest of the strike leaders is attacked by special police and RNWMP using baseball bats and small-arms fire. One man is killed, and thirty others injured.

June 23 Woodsworth arrested for taking over as editor of the *Western Labor News*, the strikers' voice, since its regular editor, W. Ivens, was arrested among the first ten.

June 25 — Fred J. Dixon, labour member of the provincial legislature, takes over as editor and he, too, is arrested.
— The Strike Committee announces that the strike is to be terminated and calls upon labour to get ready for the next round of the struggle — in the political arena — to send a large group of labour representatives to all levels of government.

June 26 The Winnipeg General Sympathetic Strike is over at 11 a.m.

Adapted from *Winnipeg 1919*

Map A List of Sites

The tour is separated into three distinct sections:
Working-Class Winnipeg
Crescentwood: Home of the Committee of 1000
Central Winnipeg: Scene of Conflict

Working-Class Winnipeg

1. C.P.R. Station (Main and Higgins)
2. Vulcan Iron Works (Sutherland Ave., Point Douglas)
3. Selkirk Ave.
4. Working-Class Housing (Several Locations)
5. All People's Mission (470 Stella Ave.)
6. Ukrainian Labor Temple (591 Pritchard Ave.)
7. Residences of the Arrested Strike Leaders (Several Locations)
8. C.P.R. Weston Shops (Logan Ave. Park)

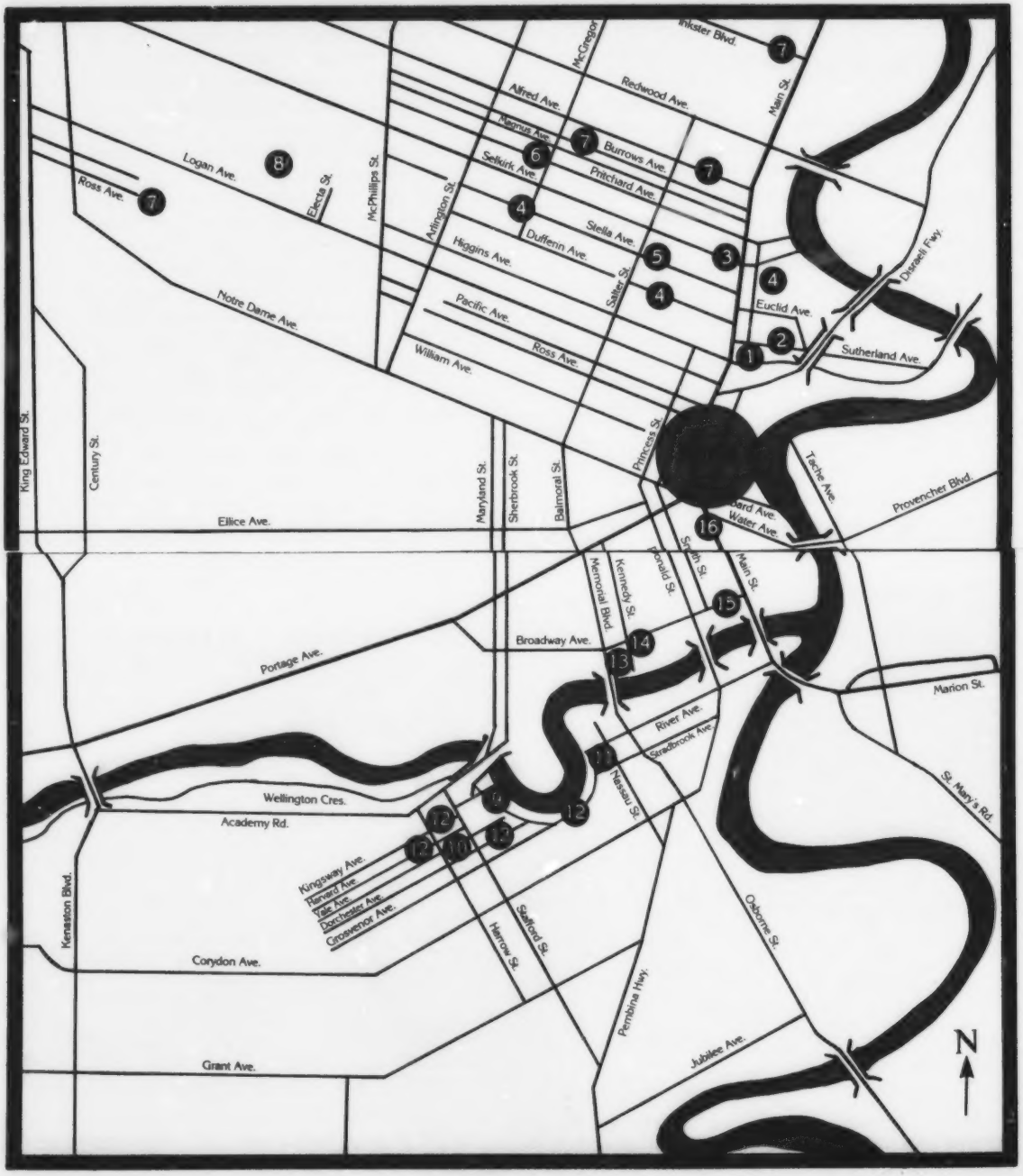
Crescentwood: Home of the Committee of 1000.

9. J.H. Ashdown Residence (529 Wellington Crescent)
10. T.R. Deacon Residence (144 Yale Ave.)
11. General Ketchen's Residence (111 Nassau Ave.)
12. Residences of the Members of the Committee of 1000 and of the Board of Trade (Several Locations)
13. Fort Osborne Barracks
14. The Legislative Grounds
15. Broadway, Manitoba Club (194 Broadway)
16. Board of Trade Building (Federal Building)

Central Winnipeg: Scene of Conflict.

This segment of the programme may be done as a walking tour. Detailed on Map B.

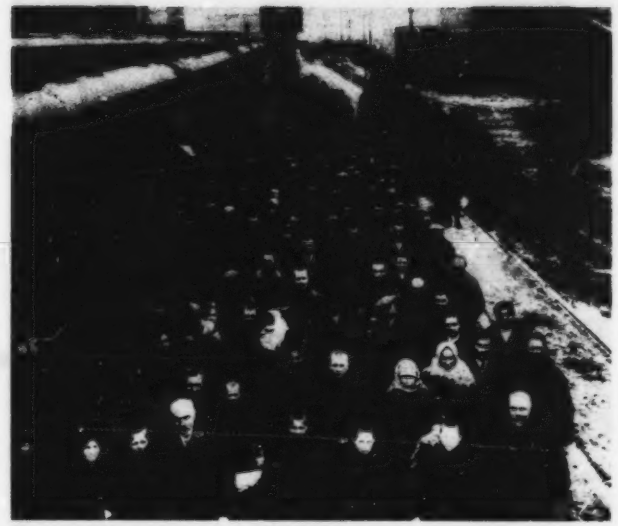
17. James Street Labor Temple (Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)
18. Victoria Park
19. Orange Hall (216 - 218 Princess Street)
20. Telegram Building (70 Albert Street)
21. Odeon (Walker) Theatre (364 Smith Street)
22. Bloody Saturday: William & Main
23. Arrest Protest Demonstration



Working-Class Winnipeg

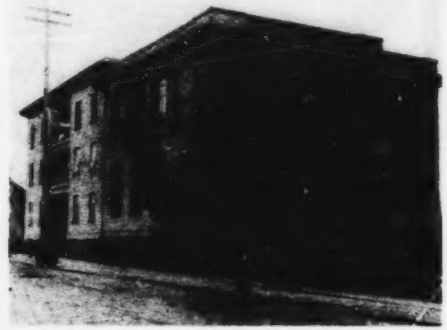
As a result of campaigns by civic and commercial leaders to attract immigrants for agriculture and industry, Winnipeg's population grew dramatically from 26,000 to 179,000 between 1891 and 1921. Almost 30 percent of these immigrants were British, Ukrainians, and Poles. Residents of other eastern European countries accounted for another eleven percent of this population increase, while much smaller groups arrived from western Europe and the United States.

Thousands of these immigrants settled in the neighbourhoods near the factories and warehouses that crowded the imposing C.P.R. marshalling yards that stretched across the city. Located within walking distance of Winnipeg's many factories, a necessity in the era before the automobile and mass public transit, such areas were usually perceived by outsiders as simply dusty, noisy, and overcrowded. More importantly, though, they supported vibrant ethnic working-class communities. These German, Jewish, Ukrainian, and British communities that grew alongside one another became the centers of labour militancy and radical politics. Many of these values and ideas were part of the immigrants' European working-class traditions, but it was the working and living conditions they experienced once in Winnipeg that underlay their extensive participation in the city's labour and socialist movements.



Immigrants arriving at C.P.R. Station.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

All People's Mission, Sutherland Avenue.
Western Canada Pictorial Index, United Church Archives.



Vulcan Iron Works.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Immigrant Family, Dufferin Avenue, "New Jerusalem." c. 1908.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

1 C.P.R. Station

Many of the immigrants who came to Winnipeg arrived here at the C.P.R. station. They were immediately taken to the immigration sheds across the street where they were processed by Canadian immigration agents. The sheds which were often over-crowded and disease-ridden were sparsely furnished with bunk beds and toilets. Pasted on the walls in many different languages were strict rules regarding behaviour.

Across the street from the immigrant halls at the corner of Higgins and Main stood the luxurious Royal Alexander Hotel. In 1919, the hotel served as the headquarters for officials from the federal government who arrived from Ottawa on 22 May to negotiate with the strikers.

2 Vulcan Iron Works, Point Douglas Area

Point Douglas was one of Winnipeg's most important industrial areas in 1919. Manufacturers of farm implements, paints, liquors, bedding, and carriages and wagons located here to take advantage of the nearby railway facilities. The Vulcan Iron Works, which stretched along the railway tracks for several city blocks, was one of Winnipeg's largest metalworking shops. Its workers who rolled and forged stock for the railways worked longer hours, earned less, and suffered in poorer working conditions than the unionized metalworkers employed directly by the railways. Before World War I the Vulcan Works employees, together with workers at Manitoba Bridge and Iron Works and Dominion Bridge, fought and lost several bitter disputes with their employers over the workers' right to have a union.

This discontent escalated during the war because the employers pressed the workers for greater production and inflation eroded the workers' incomes. Determined to improve their living standards the skilled workers struck the three shops in 1917 and 1918. But the employers again prevailed by hiring non-union labour and a detective agency. They also secured court injunctions against the picketing of their premises by the union. On 1 May 1919, yet another strike was launched over the contentious issue of union recognition. This time the strikers and their allies in the powerful Metal Trades Council, a joint bargaining committee for nineteen craft unions in the railway shops, were determined to secure a victory. All the members of the Metal Trades Council soon struck in sympathy with the Vulcan workers, and the confrontation quickly escalated towards the declaration of a general strike by the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council on 15 May 1919.

As you drive through the Point Douglas area, you will notice many examples of private homes and boarding houses that date back to General Strike era. These were the homes of the thousands of workers employed in the nearby factories. Few working people owned their own homes: families usually lived in rental houses, and single men and women sought accomodation in the boarding houses of the area.

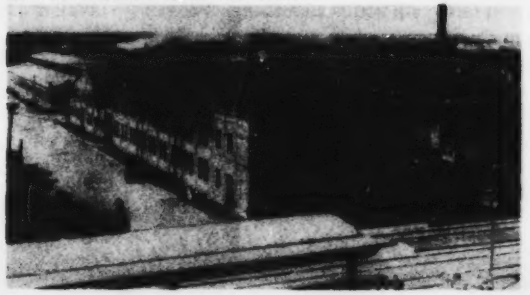
1. C.P.R. Station.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

Bookbinding, c. 1915.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Tunnelling under the Red River, 1918.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection

Teamsters.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

2. Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.



3 Selkirk Avenue

Most of the non-English speaking immigrants settled in the North End. Clustered around Selkirk Avenue was 80 percent of Winnipeg's Jewish and Slavic population. Because of this ethnic content, as well as the close proximity of the North End to the railway yards, the area was often described by residents south of the tracks as "the foreign quarter," "C.P.R. town," or "New Jerusalem." Partly because the railway yards formed a physical barrier which isolated the North End from the rest of the city, Selkirk Avenue grew as the commercial and cultural nucleus of North End Winnipeg. Located on this street were confectionaries, butcher and grocery shops, and banks, real estate and loan offices, theatres, and meeting halls. Local residents felt at home on this street. The majority of Winnipeg's British working-class immigrants lived further north, but most of the city's European immigrants, many of whom could not speak or understand English, were clustered around Selkirk Avenue. Retailers on the street spoke their language and regularly accepted credit. Newspapers were published in German, Hebrew, Polish, Ukrainian, and English. Fraternal societies like the North End Relief Association, The Workmen's Circle, and the United Hebrew Charities offered social companionship and economic aid to the needy. Thus, the immigrants rarely had to travel far from Selkirk Avenue. Around it they created their own vibrant culture which was rooted in their own political, educational, religious, and recreational institutions. The ethnic cultural identities of these workers had, by 1919, formed the basis for a broader working-class solidarity throughout the community.

4 Working-Class Housing

As you drive along North End streets like Dufferin Avenue, you will notice many examples of houses that were occupied by Winnipeg's working class in 1919. These streets of tiny houses pressed together on 25 foot lots were typical of the neighbourhoods which flanked both the north and south sides of the C.P.R. yards from Point Douglas to Keewatin Avenue. In a time when automobiles were inaccessible to the 5,000 railway workers in these neighbourhoods, living within walking distance of the job was a necessity.

The close proximity of these neighbourhoods to the railway and the nearby factories made life here difficult. Smoke filled the air, soot blackened the furniture and windows, and the constant shuttling back and forth of the trains shook the flimsy houses. Overcrowding was one of the most serious problems especially before World War I. Houses were subdivided, or two or more buildings were squeezed onto one lot so landlords could rent rooms to more tenants. As many as five families lived in these houses, while other tenants lived in the cellars. J.S. Woodsworth complained that people froze to death in winter when fierce winds blew through cracks in the walls and broken windows. In an attempt to improve their living conditions, which were responsible for terrible outbreaks of typhoid, tuberculosis, and pneumonia, many residents became active in labour unions and socialist politics.

3. *Milk Delivery Wagon, c. 1910.*
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Immigrant Family, Flora Avenue, c. 1910.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

New Jerusalem, corner Dufferin and King, c. 1904.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

4. *Tenement Housing.*
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

5 All People's Mission

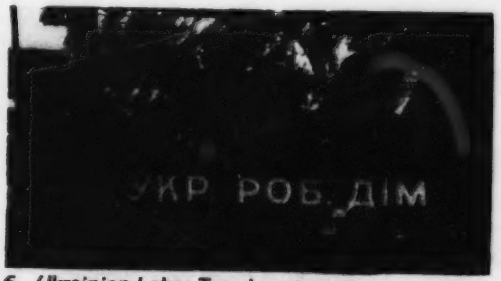
This mission was one of a dozen such institutions established in the poorest working-class neighbourhoods. Most were operated by Methodists committed to improving the social conditions of the area's inhabitants, as well as their spiritual lives. Anglican and Presbyterian missions also operated in the North End. Their programmes emphasized Anglo-Saxon values in activities that varied from direct charity to the offering of Sunday school and summer camps for the children of the poor. Health care for immigrant women and children was perhaps the missions' most important contribution. J.S. Woodsworth, who in 1933 would become the first leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, directed the work of the Stella Avenue mission from the adjoining house between 1907 and 1913. At the beginning of World War I, he left Winnipeg and did not return until the General Strike was in progress.

6 The Ukrainian Labor Temple

Numerous benefit societies and fraternal organizations flourished in Winnipeg in the late 1800s and early 1900s. These originated as voluntary organizations which emerged from the efforts of individuals who believed that economic security and social improvement for the poor could come only from collective association. The Ukrainian Labor Temple stands as one of the few surviving buildings owned by these organizations. Completed in February 1918 by members of the Ukrainian Labor Farmer Temple Association, who contributed their own labour and finances for construction, the Labor Temple exemplifies the broad social impact of fraternal and benefit societies on their local communities. For members in need the Association provided relief, loans, food, and clothing. The Temple served as a meeting place for labour unions. It organized social and educational activities like reading classes and debating clubs. Other similar organizations offered social and economic services to working-class people living in the North End and were established on ethnic lines. The Liberty Temple, for example, was established by a Jewish labour organization (at 410 Pritchard Avenue at Salter). Both the Ukrainian and Liberty Temples were raised on the night of June 16-17 by police who removed books and files that would later be used as evidence of a conspiracy during the trials of the strike leaders.

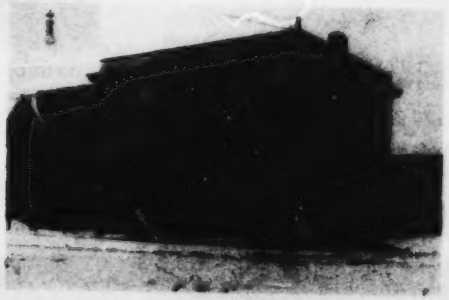
Interior, All People's Mission.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

J.S. Woodsworth.
Courtesy: Alan F.J. Artibise.



6. Ukrainian Labor Temple entrance.

Liberty Temple Activists.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada.



5. All People's Mission, Stella Avenue.
Western Canada Pictorial Index, United Church Archives.

7 Residences of the Arrested Strike Leaders

The arrests of the strike leaders on June 17 were dramatic. At 2:00 a.m. eight police cars swept down on the homes of the men who were to be arrested. Each carried three armed police officers. They roused the suspects from their sleep and took them to a north-end police station where they were charged and then sent directly to the Stony Mountain Penitentiary. At the same time the police raided the James Street and Ukrainian Labor Temple, and the offices of the *Western Labor News*. Russell, Queen, Armstrong, Bray, Heaps, Ivens, Pritchard, and Johns were charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government by force. All these men were of British origin, and they were prominent working-class leaders in the local and regional labour and socialist movements. In the years before the General Strike these men had gained the respect of Winnipeg's working-class population. These supporters would come to their aid after the arrests. Four other men were apprehended by the police on June 17. Matthew Charitonoff, B. Devyatken, Oscar Schoppelrel, and Moses Almazoff were not prominent members of the Strike Committee, but were arrested in the government's attempt to blame the strike on "alien" conspirators.

Residences

A.A. Heaps, furrier, 562 Burrows Ave.*
Williams Ivens, Labor Church minister and journalist, 309 Inkster Ave.*
John Queen, cooper, 317 Alfred Ave.*
R.B. Russell, machinist, 1415 Ross Ave.*
R.J. Johns, machinist, 256 Isabel Street.
George Armstrong, carpenter, Edmonton Street.
R.E. Bray, butcher and returned soldier, East Kildonan.
William Pritchard, carpenter, a Vancouver labour organizer residing in Winnipeg at the time of the strike.

*Indicates that the house still exists.

Arrested strike leaders: Back row, left to right; R.E. Bray, G. Armstrong, J. Queen, R.B. Russell, R.J. Johns, W.A. Pritchard. Front row; W.A. Ivens, A.A. Heaps.
Public Archives of Canada

7. A.A. Heaps House.

7. John Queen's House.

Manitoba Free Press, Front Page, June 18, 1919.
Western Canada Pictorial Index

Manitoba Fre

7. Russell's House.

R.B. (Bob) Russell

When the eight police cars spread out across Winnipeg's working-class neighbourhoods to arrest the leaders of the General Strike early on the morning of 17 June, one car stopped in front of the house at 1415 Ross Ave. Three armed police officers entered the house, roused Russell from his bed and charged him with conspiracy to overthrow the government. While Russell dressed, the police swept the letters and notes on Russell's writing desk into a burlap sack and confiscated the books and pamphlets on his shelves for evidence to be used at his trial. Before dawn Russell, with the other arrested strike leaders, was quickly taken to the Stoney Mountain Penitentiary and jailed until massive popular support for the men forced their release on bail three days later. Among the leaders of the Winnipeg labour movement in 1919, Russell was the one most feared by the government and Committee of 1000. His broad, popular support among Winnipeg's working people and national prominence as a socialist and trade union leader commanded respect for Russell even from his opponents.

Russell arrived in Winnipeg from Glasgow in 1911 as a fully apprenticed machinist and immediately found employment in the Weston Shops. A staunch trade unionist, Russell's intelligence and articulate voice soon brought him to prominence in the International Association of Machinists and in the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council. Russell, like many other skilled workers at the time, gradually adopted a socialist perspective because of the conditions he faced in the workplace and at home. He was particularly irritated by the employers' adoption of "scientific management" and new technologies to erode the skilled workers' traditional control of the shopfloor.

Russell was an activist in the Socialist Party of Canada and, in March 1919, he was a member of the Winnipeg delegation to the Western Labor Conference in Calgary, which concluded with an appeal to all workers to organize the O.B.U. Russell was deeply involved in creating the O.B.U. when the General Strike began in May.

In November 1919, he received a two year penitentiary term for his role in the General Strike, the longest sentence of any of the strike leaders. However, public pressure won his early release in December 1920.

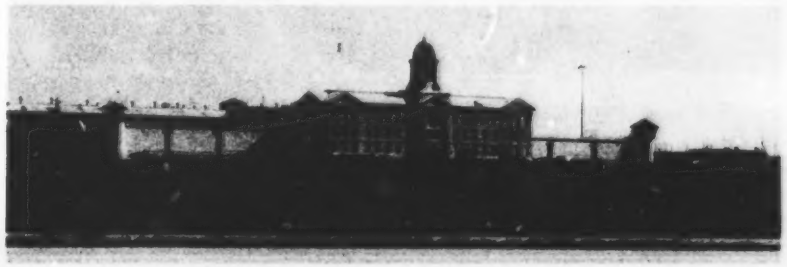
Russell immediately resumed his advocacy of the O.B.U. and continued to be one of Canada's most respected labour leaders until his death in 1964. In 1967, the Winnipeg and District Labour Council officially recognized Russell's singular contribution to the labour movement with a memorial plaque erected at the R.B. Russell Vocational School.

R.B. Russell.
Courtesy: Mary Jordan.

8. C.P.R. Weston Shops.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Protesting the arrest of strike leaders.
Public Archives of Canada.

Stony Mountain Penitentiary.



Commemoration Plaque on R.B. Russell School.

8 C.P.R. Weston Shops

The C.P.R. and C.N.R. employed about 10,000 workers throughout Winnipeg. The railways' operations were extremely complex and required a large number and variety of skilled workers and hundreds of labourers to maintain the rail system, run the trains, and handle the huge volume of freight and passengers that passed through Winnipeg. The Weston Shops, one of several such facilities associated with the railways in the city, hired hundreds of skilled machinists, moulders, plumbers, pipefitters, and other skilled workers. Large numbers of semi-skilled workers and labourers also found work here. In these shops, of which only a small part of the original buildings remain, the men repaired the company's steam engines, built and repaired freight and passenger cars, forged steel for rails, and did the many other jobs required for the successful operation of the railway.

Long hours of labour, dirty and noisy working conditions, and low wages prompted the skilled workers to organize into craft unions in the years before World War I. During the war, these nineteen craft unions organized a Metal Trades Council to improve their bargaining power with the C.P.R. The craft exclusiveness of these unions, though, meant that the semi-skilled and labourers in the shops were without union representation. R.B. Russell, R.J. Johns, and their supporters among the skilled metal workers argued against this rigid craft structure and proposed to replace it with an industrial union that represented all the workers in the shops. The Metal Trades Council was transforming itself into just such a body by 1919, under the direction of Russell. At the time of the General Strike, Russell and Johns were organizing with other socialist workers in Winnipeg and across Canada to create the One Big Union. The O.B.U., which was an extension of the industrial union model emerging in the railway shops, was to include all Canadian workers, regardless of their skill or gender, in a single industrial union.

Railway workers, c. 1913.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

Transcona Shops, c. 1915.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Grand Trunk Pacific workers, c. 1915.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

C.N.R. strikers at the Legislature, 1914.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Crescentwood: Home of the Committee of 1000.

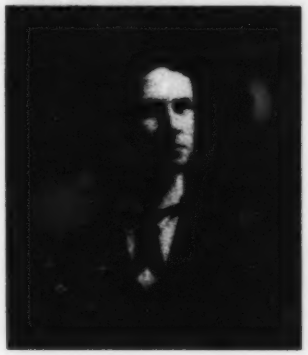
By 1900 the expansion of the business and industrial districts into older residential areas compelled many wealthy homeowners to move further away from the encroaching center of the city. Crescentwood was a logical choice for those with wealth who were searching for an alternative to the Broadway district on the northeast side of the Assiniboine River. The beauty of the thickly treed river property, and the conscious attempts of developers to advertise the area as a spacious, quiet, and luxurious neighborhood made Crescentwood extremely alluring to prospective homeowners. Building restrictions insured the construction of only large houses and mansions located on lots from 200 to 300 feet deep.

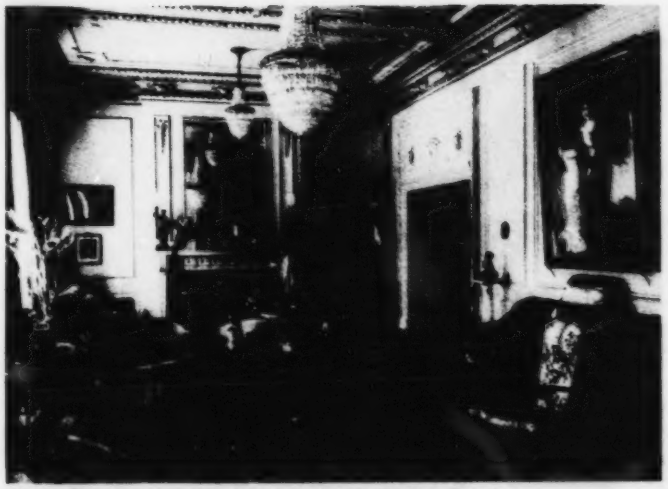
The river formed a natural barrier against the noise and traffic of the rest of the city. This insular nature of the community was reinforced by occupational and ethnic bonds. By 1919 Crescentwood was populated by lawyers, grain merchants, bankers, and industrialists — the most powerful and influential people in Winnipeg. They served together as directors of various boards of banks, trust companies, business organizations, and often as councillors at City Hall. The majority were of British descent with their own social clubs, private schools, churches, parks, stores, and even a university nearby. Most of South Winnipeg played an active role in resisting the General Strike. Alderman A.J. Andrews of 749 Wellington Crescent participated in planning the arrests of the strike leaders, while Isaac Pitblado of 523 Wellington Crescent served as the prosecuting attorney at their trial. Others volunteered their services for the activities of the Committee of 1000.

Except for domestics, servants, and gardeners who attended to the needs of the elite, few working people ventured into this area. However, the peaceful seclusion of Crescentwood was dramatically broken three weeks into the General Strike. On 5 June, members of the Great War Veterans Association who supported the strike led a massive parade of 4,000 strikers from Victoria Park through the centre of the city and across the Maryland Bridge into Crescentwood. They marched along Wellington Crescent, singing and cheering their way to the Legislature via the Osborne Street Bridge. Crescentwood residents reportedly bolted their doors when the workers approached the streets of this normally secluded residential district.

Alexander MacDonald Home, Wellington Crescent.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

A.J. Andrews.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.





Music Room, Augustus Nanton Home, Roslyn Road.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

St. Mary's Academy, 1874.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

9 Ashdown Home

This house was once owned by a Freemason, J.H. Ashdown. After arriving in Winnipeg from Ontario in 1868, Ashdown established a small hardware store that grew into a million dollar business that stretched across the prairies. Ashdown was a prominent Conservative active in federal and provincial parties. His political career also included several terms as a city councillor and he was Mayor of Winnipeg in 1907-1908. His business portfolio included directorships with several banks, and he was involved in the Board of Trade and the Manitoba Club.

10 T.R. Deacon House

Born in Perth, Ontario, Thomas Russell Deacon came to Winnipeg in 1901. Deacon owned the Manitoba Bridge and Iron works. In 1912 Ashdown and other businessmen nominated Deacon for Mayor, and he was elected for the 1913-1914 term. A rigid believer in private enterprise, his opposition to trade unionism led metal workers at his plant to strike in 1917 and on May 1, 1919.

11 General Ketchen House

General Ketchen was the commanding officer of the military force stationed in Winnipeg in 1919. At the Committee of 1000's first meeting, Ketchen warned that the regular army stationed at the nearby Osborne St. Barracks was too small to control the strikers and he called for a build up of the militia. He also advised Mayor Gray to swear in the "specials" recruited by the Committee of 1000 after Gray dismissed the regular police force because it was sympathetic to the strikers. Federal authorities later acted on Ketchen's counsel when they arrested the strike leaders. On June 21, Ketchen dutifully responded to Mayor Gray's request to bring out the militia and clear the strikers from the streets.

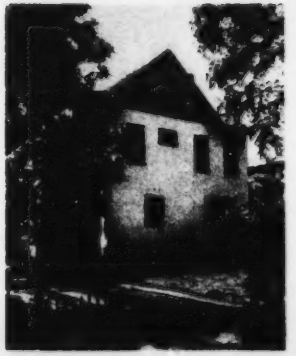
9. Ashdown House, c. 1915.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

J.H. Ashdown, c. 1915.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

T.R. Deacon.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

10. Deacon House.

Brigadier General HBD Ketchen.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.



11. Ketchen House.

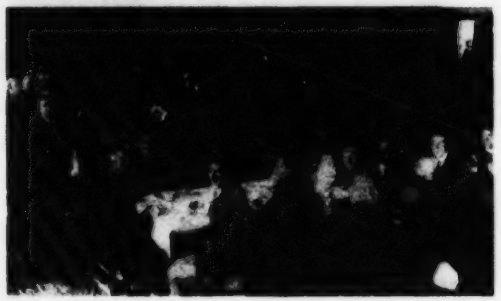
12 Residences of the Members of the Committee of 1000 and the Board of Trade

The Committee of 1000 was organized as soon as the strike began by the residents of Winnipeg who opposed the unions' position. Chaired by A.K. Godfrey, Past President of the Board of Trade, and led by people such as A.L. Crossin, an insurance broker, and J.E. Botterell, a grain broker and member of the Board of Trade, the Committee of 1000 widely publicized its intentions to operate public utilities and other essential services with volunteers. This was only one of its functions during the strike. Through its newspaper, *The Citizen*, the Committee of 1000 attempted to sway public opinion toward its own conviction that sympathy strikes were unnecessary, expensive, and potentially dangerous to public and private property. Towards this end *The Citizen* portrayed the General Strike as a "Bolshevik Revolution" led by foreign revolutionaries. These sentiments were also expressed by Aldermen like John K. Sparling and A.J. Andrews who lived in Crescentwood and were sympathetic to, if not members of, the Committee of 1000. The committee's position that the city should not negotiate with the strikers held sway on City Council.

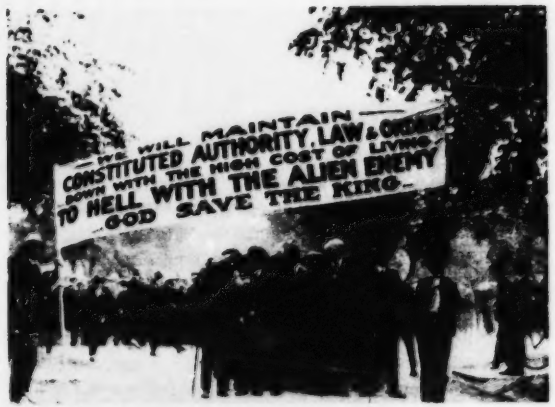
The Committee enjoyed the support of W.H. Carter, President of the Board of Trade, and W.B. Moore, its secretary. The Manitoba Grocers' Association, The Canadian Manufacturers' Association, The Retail Merchants' Association, and many other business and professional organizations made financial contributions to the Committee of 1000 during the General Strike.

12. Godfrey House.

Citizen's Committee of 1000 Meeting, 1919.
Public Archives of Canada.



Women volunteers operating service station, May 1919.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.


WE WILL MAINTAIN
CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY, LAW & ORDER
DOWN WITH THE HIGH COST OF LIVING
TO HELL WITH THE ALIEN ENEMY
GOD SAVE THE KING

Great War Veterans Parade, June 4, 1919.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Residences

A.L. Crossin, 240 Harvard
A.K. Godfrey, 144 Kingsway
J.E. Botterell, 254 Wellington
W.H. Carter, 251 Harvard
W.B. Moore, 785 Dorchester

13 Fort Osborne Barracks

14 The Legislative Grounds

On their way from Crescentwood on June 5, the Great War Veterans paraded past Fort Osborne Barracks and the Granite Curling Club to the Provincial Legislature. The present building was nearing completion, while the old parliament buildings stood on Kennedy just south of Broadway. On the same day the Committee of 1000 assembled an anti-strike group of "Loyalist" veterans composed of lawyers and insurance and real estate brokers on a vacant lot at Broadway and Main St. Led by Frederick G. Thompson, a lawyer, they paraded to the parliament buildings. Participants carried Union Jacks and placards denouncing the strikers as enemy aliens and revolutionaries. They demanded that "law and order" be re-established in Winnipeg.

15 Broadway, Manitoba Club

The neighbourhoods south and north of Broadway were in transition in 1919. Though many residents had already moved to the West End, Armstrong's Point, and Crescentwood, some preferred to stay on their large lots along the Assiniboine River or in the luxurious houses and apartment blocks on Broadway, Carlton, Edmonton, Fort, and Kennedy Streets. The area was popular among well-to-do doctors, lawyers, and upwardly mobile young businessmen who preferred to remain within walking distance of the downtown office district. Also located in this area were also numerous public buildings — the old and new legislatures, University of Manitoba buildings, Law Courts, Provincial Gaol, as well as several social and athletic clubs frequented by the wealthy. The Manitoba Club's membership included the members of the Board of Trade and the Committee of 1000, as well as civic and provincial politicians. Organized in 1874, the Manitoba Club was an all male social club of the Anglo-Saxon elite. In 1919 it was a meeting place for businessmen discussing strategies in dealing with the strikers.

16 The Board of Trade Building

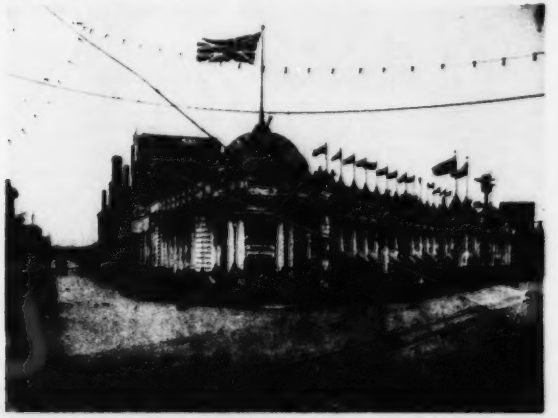
The Federal Building (Main St. South) now stands on the former site of the Board of Trade Building. The building was the headquarters of the Committee of 1000 and its newspaper, *The Citizen*. Volunteer firefighting and public utility services were run from here. The Committee of 1000 set up a sign over the entrance of the building which a group of angry war veterans tore down on June 3.

13. Fort Osborne Barracks, June 21, 1919.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

15. Interior, Manitoba Club, 194 Broadway.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

14. Kennedy St. Legislature, 1917.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

16. Headquarters of the Citizen's Committee of 1000, Winnipeg Board of Trade Building.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.



Central Winnipeg: Scene of Conflict.

On 15 May, the two week old strike of metal and building trades workers rapidly escalated towards a general strike. By mid-morning the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council had effectively brought its 12,000 members out of the city's shops, offices, and factories. Unionized workers were joined in their strike by thousands of unorganized men and women until Winnipeg was virtually shut down. Telegraph, telephone, and mail services stopped, leaving Winnipeg temporarily isolated from the rest of the world. Even the police voted 114 to 11 to strike. Although the police remained on duty at the request of the Strike Committee, their sympathy with the strikers soon brought their dismissal by Mayor Gray. "Special Police" recruited by the mayor and the Committee of 1000 replaced the police, a decision that heightened tension between the strikers and the employers and state authorities.

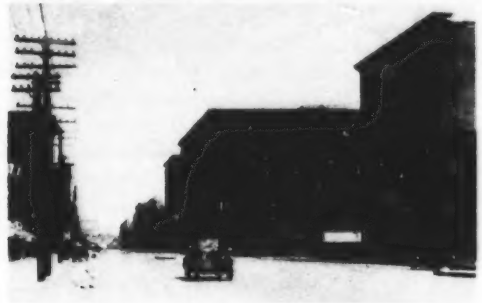
Central Winnipeg was a contested terrain in the spring of 1919. Milling crowds of pro- and anti-strikers paraded, demonstrated, and jostled daily with one another in this area. Rumours about the progress of the strike and the appearance of the "Specials" on street corners quickly brought hundreds of people into the streets. On June 10, a strikers' demonstration at Portage and Main forced the city to withdraw the "Specials" from the corner and sent a group of mounted policemen scurrying back to their barracks. Later an anti-strike alderman testified that the appearance of the "Specials" was a "test" to determine who had "control of the streets." The area was also the headquarters of the main protagonists in the strike —the Strike Committee and Committee of 1000.

This part of the tour can be walked or driven. It includes a thematic interpretation of downtown buildings and streets related to the 1919 strike, some of which no longer exist. You can begin your tour at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, where two of the most significant sites to labour, the James Street Labor Temple and Victoria Park, were once located. Then circle the warehouse district and finish at William and Main where the dramatic events of Bloody Saturday occurred. Many of the existing commercial buildings in this area were constructed before 1919 and the Historic Winnipeg Restoration Area Tour Booklet available at the Museum is a guide to their history.

Members of the Winnipeg police force.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Headline announcing the beginning of the strike, June 16, 1919.

Portage Avenue near Eaton's, May 25, 1919.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.



Strikers' meeting in Victoria Park.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba. Foote Collection.

Volunteer Firefighters.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

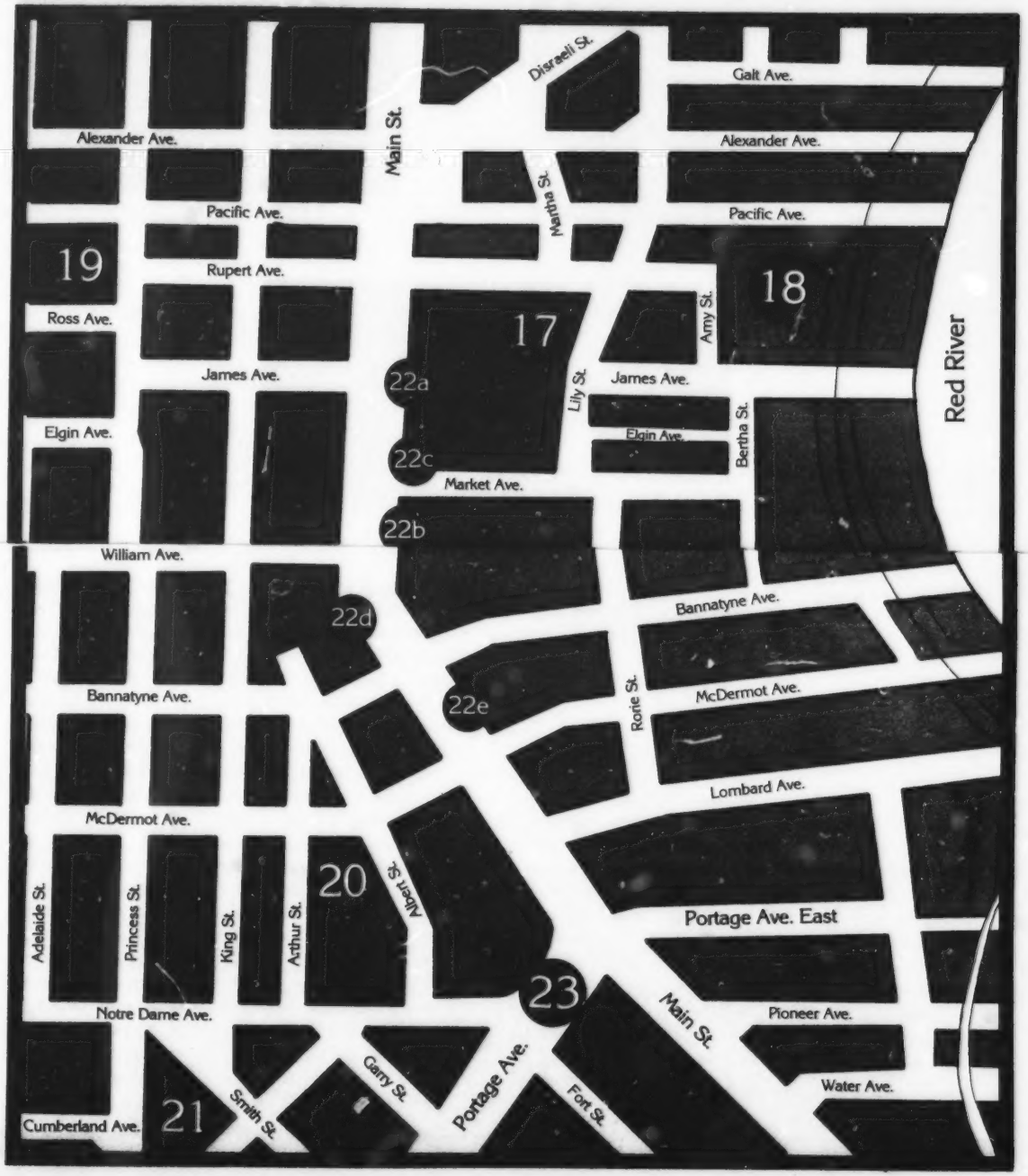
Volunteer 'special police' on Main Street, June 21, 1919.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Map B List of Sites

Central Winnipeg: Scene of Conflict.

This segment of the programme may be done as a walking tour. Detailed on Map B.

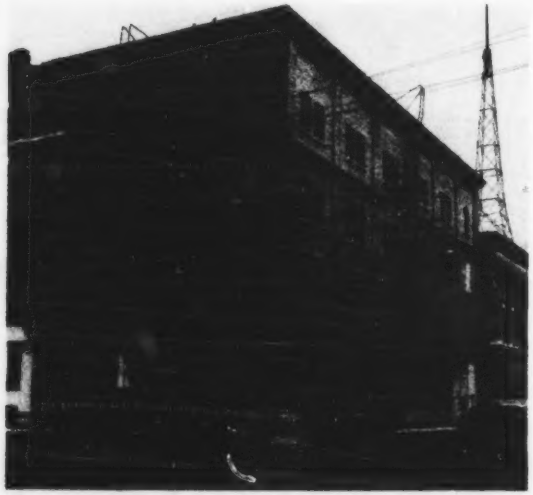
17. James Street Labor Temple (Manitoba Museum of Man & Nature)
18. Victoria Park
19. Orange Hall (216 - 218 Princess Street)
20. Telegram Building (70 Albert Street)
21. Odeon (Walker) Theatre (364 Smith Street)
22. Bloody Saturday: William & Main
23. Arrest Protest Demonstration



17 James Street Labor Temple

The James Street Labor Temple was the labour movement's city hall. Union locals rented rooms in the temple and it housed the offices of the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council. In spring 1919, R.B. Russell, a prominent member of the labour council, was organizing the fledgling O.B.U. from his second storey office in the Labor Temple. Here, on 1 May 1919, the unions in the Building Trades Council called for a general strike of its members to enforce demands for a wage increase. This was the first in a series of rapidly unfolding events that precipitated the General Strike. On 2 May, the Metal Trades Council decided to strike to support the demands of its members in the contract shops for union recognition. When the employers refused to negotiate, the Building and Metal councils petitioned the Trades and Labor Council for help. They were not disappointed. On 13 May, as reported in the *Western Labor News*, "never before in the history of Winnipeg has there been such a Trades Council session. It was tense, electric and determined. Every inch was jammed with a seething mass of trades unionists, men and women." Upon hearing about the abortive attempts by the Metal and Building Councils to reach a settlement with the employers and Mayor Gray, the delegates debated a general strike motion affecting all Trades and Labor Council members. "Amid an oppressive hush" the results of the ballot were announced: "over eleven thousand had voted aye and only five hundred no. The meeting broke into cheers. It was unanimously and enthusiastically decided to call the strike at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 15." Next, the meeting elected 300 members to a General Strike Committee from which a fifteen member Central Strike Committee was elected. The Strike Committee held daily sessions in the labour temple throughout the duration of the General Strike. It authorized workers in essential services, like the police, to continue working during the strike and issued "Permitted By The Authority of the Strike Committee" posters to the small corner stores in the North End that provided the strikers with essentials like food and milk. Mayor Gray and the Committee of 1000 contended that these posters represented a usurption of "constituted authority" by the strikers.

For the strike leaders it was a hurried but exciting time. Each day began with a discussion "of strike business in the morning, including a general view of the situation." Next came a quick lunch followed by "an hour in the Strike Committee" after which the leaders were "away to address the waiting crowds, pass along the information available, then back to the Strike Committee till 6 o'clock." After a short dinner break, it was off "to all points of the compass, within the city and outside, to talk to other waiting crowds; back to the Strike Committee until the wee small hours" and finally, "a weary tramp homewards."



17. James Street Labor Temple, headquarters of the Strike Committee.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Placard issued to stores and delivery wagons by the Strike Committee.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

PERMITTED BY

AUTHORITY OF

STRIKE COMMITTE..

Winnipeg Strike Committee.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

18 Victoria Park

The Labor Temple was too small to hold the thousands of strikers who gathered each day for information on the strike. Instead, mass meetings were held close by in Victoria Park on the south side of Pacific Avenue between Arny and the Red River.

Several critical meetings were held here during the General Strike. On 25 May, 5,000 strikers rejected a federal government ultimatum ordering telephone, post office, and fire department workers to return immediately to their jobs. Two weeks later, Mayor Gray addressed a crowd and "got a good hearing" when he informed the strikers that parades through the streets of Winnipeg had to stop. Gray's declaration was not unwelcome by the strike leaders. They constantly implored the strikers to stay away from such parades for fear that they may turn violent. Mass demonstrations in Victoria Park, however, continued until the end of the General Strike.

19 Thomas Scott Memorial Orange Hall

This hall was part of Winnipeg's vibrant fraternal life in 1919. Orangemen were usually, though not exclusively, working class. The Scott Hall was often rented to local unions that could not afford to build their own labor temples. Unions used the halls for meetings, social gatherings, and reading rooms, playing an important role in the early history of the Winnipeg labour movement.

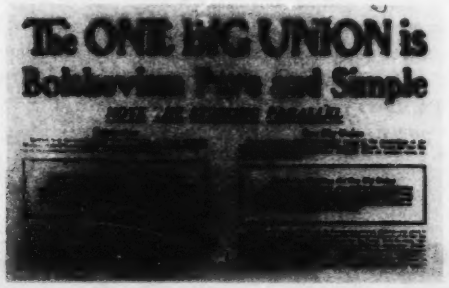
20 The Telegram Building

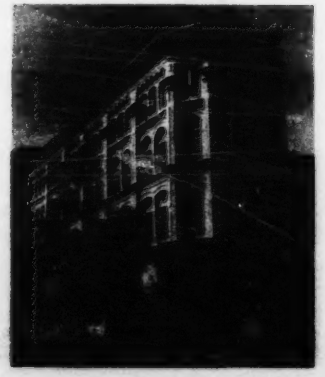
This building was the home of the *Telegram*, a daily newspaper which, like the *Free Press* and *Tribune*, joined with the *Citizen* in condemning the General Strike. The *Telegram* referred to the strike as a "deliberate, criminal and fantastic attempt to make a revolution." The *Telegram* combined its strike news with sensationalist reporting on the Russian Revolution to help create a 'Red Scare' in Winnipeg. Though the *Telegram* and anti-strike demonstrators warned of revolution by 'alien' agitators, the principal strike leaders were trade unionists of British origin.

18. Victoria Park Meeting.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

19. Thomas Scott Memorial Orange Hall.

Anti-strike newspaper headline.





20. Telegram Building.

21 Odeon (Walker) Theatre

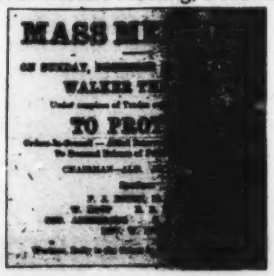
Because it had a capacity of 2,000 the theatre was used by labour organizations for gatherings too large to be held in their own meeting rooms. On Sunday, 22 December 1918, a mass meeting of Winnipeg workers called by representatives of the Socialist Party of Canada (whose offices were across the steet from the present day Marlborough Hotel), the Social Democratic Party, Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, and Great War Veterans Association was held here. Chaired by John Queen, the meeting heard speakers denounce the federal government for incarcerating political prisoners under the War Measures Act, demand an end to foreign military intervention in Russia, and accuse large Canadian corporations of profiteering during the war.

Women Workers

Many women workers went on strike on May 15. Led by Helen Armstrong, a member of the Strike Committee and a prominent advocate of women's rights, the women employed in Eaton's formed picket lines in front of the department store. On several occasions crowds of women strikers, and other women sympathetic to the strike, impeded delivery wagons when non-union drivers attempted to make deliveries in the South and West ends of the city. Deliveries into the working-class districts of Brooklands and Weston were halted after drivers complained of harassment by crowds of women blocking the routes of the wagons. Helen Armstrong was jailed for several days because of her participation in similar activities during the strike.

Although many women found work in the city's retail stores, many more were employed in laundries, garment factories, public utilities, restaurants, bakeries, hotels, and candy factories. The participation of these women and others, whose husbands, fathers, or sons were on strike, was essential to the organization and maintenance of the General Strike. They took part in public meetings, demonstrations, and parades, managed households without their regular income, and some joined the Women's Labor League which organized relief kitchens at the Oxford and Strathcona Hotels on Main Street. The League fed as many as 1,500 strikers each day during the strike.

Notice of Walker Theatre Meeting, December, 1918.



21. Interior Walker Theatre.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Eaton's book bindery.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

St. Mary's Academy Laundry.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Telephone operators.
Western Canada Pictorial Index.

22 Events of Bloody Saturday

From this corner you can view the portion of Main Street where the events of Bloody Saturday took place. Parades and demonstrations were held at old City Hall, where the modern complex now stands, until Mayor Gray issued an unconstitutional declaration which banned them after June 5. On the evening of June 20, pro-strike veterans met here and scheduled a parade for the next day in protest against the arrests of key strike leaders. Mayor Gray addressed the crowd, reminding the war veterans that parades had been banned. After meeting for three and a half hours the next morning, Federal Government officials, pro-strike veterans, the Strike Committee, and Mayor Gray failed to reach an agreement that would stop the parade. Meanwhile huge crowds of men, women, and children had gathered at City Hall to watch the parade.

Mayor Gray was informed that the situation was out of control, and he sent for the Royal Northwest Mounted Police (R.N.W.M.P.) to patrol the streets. At 2:30 p.m. 54 police on horses and 36 in trucks had arrived at Portage and Main. Meanwhile a street car driven by a Committee of 1000 volunteer drove South on Main. As it passed in front of the City Hall, the trolley was pulled off its track, and people began breaking its windows, rocked it back and forth and then set it on fire.

The R.N.W.M.P. walked their horses into the crowd then began trotting as they passed the Union Bank (now the Royal). Most of the police wore the traditional red uniforms, but a few near the end of the line wore army-style uniforms. The appearance of these returned soldiers on horseback enraged the pro-strike veterans, who jeered and booed at the riders as they went by. As they rode back towards Portage, the police were pelted with rocks and bricks. On the steps of City Hall, Mayor Gray read the Riot Act and ordered the streets cleared in half an hour.

The R.N.W.M.P. then charged into the crowd with their clubs in hand and were met with another barrage of stones. A third attack on the crowds followed quickly upon the second, and this time the police had their clubs in one hand and revolvers in the other. As they turned into the crowd at William Avenue they fired their revolvers. An older man standing by the Union Bank was hit and others fell wounded. As they rode past the front of City Hall a man standing by the Manitoba Hotel picked up a brick, but before he could throw it he was shot dead.

During the charges of the R.N.W.M.P. hundreds of "Special Police" assembled at the Rupert Avenue police station behind the Labor Temple. At approximately 3:15 p.m., after the R.N.W.M.P. fired into the crowds, the "Specials" left the police station and cordoned off Main Street to prevent the fleeing strikers from returning. About 200 people fled into the alley between Market and James Streets. "Special Police" attacked them with batons and gunfire from both ends of the alley. The crowd defended itself with bricks, bottles, and fists. In ten minutes 27 people were injured. "Special Police," militia, and R.N.W.M.P. occupied the streets until late that night.

22a. Corner of William and Main, Union (Royal) Bank and old City Hall. Western Canada Pictorial Index.

22c. Mounted Police walk into a crowd, 2:30 p.m.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

22d. Second and third charges disperse the crowds.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba

Events as seen from the photographer's position.

22b. Crowds gather at William and Main.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

22e. Police occupy the streets.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Foote Collection.

Legacy of the General Strike

In the evening rumours of another parade began to circulate throughout the city. Fearing more violence, a delegation from the Strike Committee met with Premier Norris and promised to call off the General Strike, if Norris promised to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate local labour conditions and to study the causes of the General Strike. Norris agreed to these demands, despite strong opposition from the Committee of 1000, and on June 26 at 11:00 a.m., the General Strike officially ended. The combined power of the government and employers that lined up against the strikers in 1919 meant that most workers won little from the confrontation; indeed, some, like the police, lost their jobs. But many workers did not view the General Strike as a failure. The Strike Committee called on workers to carry the fight for collective bargaining and the social changes they envisioned into the political field. This they did with remarkable success. In the November civic elections, labour increased its representation from five to seven aldermen, and in the 1920 provincial election, labour elected eleven members to the legislature, four of them strike leaders, three of whom were still in the penitentiary. J.S. Woodsworth, arrested for his participation in the strike, was elected to the House of Commons one year later.

The trials of the eight strike leaders charged during the police raids of 17 June and those of Fred Dixon and J.S. Woodsworth, who had been arrested several days later, began in December 1919 and ended in April 1920. Woodsworth, Dixon, and Heaps were acquitted; Pritchard, Ivens, Armstrong, Johns, and Queen were sentenced to one year; Bray received six months; and R.B. Russell was sentenced to two years. A Defence Committee, essentially the Strike Committee reformulated, sponsored parades and national speaking tours to aid the arrested strike leaders. The committee's activities and the trials of the strike leaders kept attention on the events of May 1919 long after the strike had ended.

The local impact of the General Strike was enormous. It continues even today to shape political configurations in civic and provincial affairs. The importance of the General Strike, however, reached well beyond the Manitoba border. It planted the seeds of industrial unionism that sprouted in the 1940s and grew into the modern Canadian labour movement.

Further Readings:

David Jay Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg* (Montreal, 1974).

D.C. Masters, *The Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto, 1973).

Norman Penner, *Winnipeg 1919* (Toronto, 1975).

Kenneth Osborne, *R.B. Russell and the Labour Movement* (Toronto, 1978).

Labour/Le Travail: Journal of Canadian Labour Studies, 13 (Spring, 1984), Special Issue on 1919.

23. Workers protest trials of strike leaders, Portage and Main, 1919.
Public Archives of Canada.

Poster from Ivens' and Queen's Provincial Election Committee, 1941.
Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Courtesy: MMMN

This poster is an excellent and rare example of labour memorabilia.
Public institutions dedicated to the preservation of labour's heritage include:

The Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature
and
The Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

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